



VIP2VIP



Season 2, Volume 5 Big Bend National Park's Volunteer Newsletter April 15, 2003

SCAs SHINE at BIG BEND

SCA's bring youthful energy and enthusiasm to their efforts at Big Bend. Those qualities are in abundance in our current group of SCAs. Get to know them a little better before they leave and you'll be the better for it.

Illinois native Katrina Jensen brings a sense of delight to her work. She describes life in the PJ trailer known as the Detrouiter as "sketchy", but she loves the lazyboy. Katrina's high point here has been hiking the South Rim twice. She and Adessa Schwartz made a big splash during training when they dumped their canoe in two feet of water in Mariscal Canyon. When asked about her silliest visitor question, she replied that two very solid looking young men asked if it was safe to hike Mule Ears Spring trail in the wind! Katrina, like Casey Parks, is somewhat of a returnee to Big Bend. She applied to work here as an SCA after visiting three years ago when she hiked the Mesa de Anguila and canoed the Santa Elena Canyon (without dumping!). Katrina will be part of a trail crew at Bridger-Teton Wilderness Area in Wyoming this summer and hopes to return to Big Bend in the fall in a paid position.

Maria Lavender is a young woman who is an old hand at good works. As part of the curriculum at Warren Wilson College, which the Ohio native attended (an environmental studies major), students were required to do community service. In Maria's case, this included working in Russia, removing dangerous lead paint at orphanages. She has done graduate work in oceanography and hopes ultimately to work in that field. Maria's tenure here as an SCA began last October. She particularly enjoys her resource management work, and has recently been re-shooting historic photographs to determine how much vegetation in the park has changed. Maria says she really enjoyed our recent late March snow in the Chisos. She will be heading to Mexico and Central America for some relaxation and travel with friends for the summer, and has applied to several environmental education organizations for a more career-oriented position this fall.



KATRINA JENSEN



MARIA LAVENDER



CASEY PARKS & ADESSA SCHWARTZ

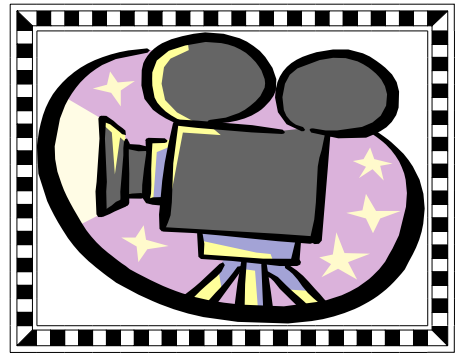
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Casey Parks, curly-haired Kansas native , is a talented teacher who conducted classes as an undergraduate at KSU. His interpretive program on the role of the Big Bend area in the Mexican Revolution has been well received by visitors. Casey finds doing the program very rewarding, even though he was initially nervous about it. His most interesting experience at Big Bend has been living in the Detroit at PJ, with Jessica Sherwood and Katrina. Casey is excited about his next assignment. After leaving Big Bend in May, he will be trained by Teach for America (a Peace Corps-like agency) to be a special education teacher at a Navaho Reservation in northwest New Mexico. Ironically, Casey and his family visited Big Bend when he was a child, but he only remembers being upset that they couldn't go to the beach at Padre Island instead!

Adessa Schwartz is soft-spoken, but this multi-talented musician also has a lovely singing voice. The Michigan native is the lone SCA in Castolon. Her work has focused primarily on back country patrol, including hiking many trails. She has also played camp host, horse caretaker and has had lots of informal visitor contact. When asked about her favorite aspect of her SCA experience, Adessa said she really enjoyed her hikes, especially Tule Springs and Upper Burro Mesa. As a former environmental sciences major at Central Michigan U., Adessa would like to make that her career. This summer, she will return to Gateway National Recreation Area (in New Jersey this time, rather than NYC) and will be studying shore birds. Adessa's heart is in the West, however, and she hopes to be back in the area after her summer job.



IMPORTANT NOTICE! ONCE YOU SUBMIT YOUR PAPERWORK FOR REIMBURSEMENTS, PLEASE WAIT 2-3 DAYS AND THEN SEE TERRY BOREN IN ADMINISTRATION M-F, 8-5 TO SIGN FOR YOUR CHECK. DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MOMENT TO SUBMIT YOUR REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST!



MOVIE RE-MAKES BIG BEND VIP STYLE

We've re-cast a few well known flicks with a local twist and our VIPs in starring roles:

The Road to Castolon - starring Richard Engle as Bob Hope, Lloyd Burgi as Bing Crosby and Carol Hines as Dorothy Lamour and their gang of hangers-on (for dear life) as they bump their way to adventure along the River Road.

Gone with the Wind - starring the Rio Grande Village volunteers as they hang on (for dear life) in the wild winds and the burning of the (Atlanta) boardwalk.

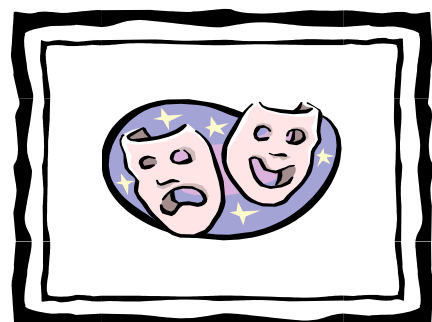
The Accidental Tourist - starring Norma & Lloyd Burgi and Reta & Richard Averill who came here on an innocent vacations and ended up as valued volunteers.

Bird on a Wire – starring Fran and Bernie Heyman

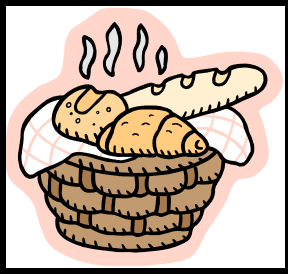
Snowbound - starring the Chisos Basin VIPs

A River Runs Through It - starring super-volunteer Steve McAllister as both brothers!

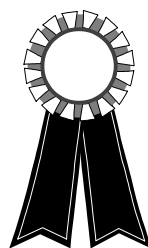
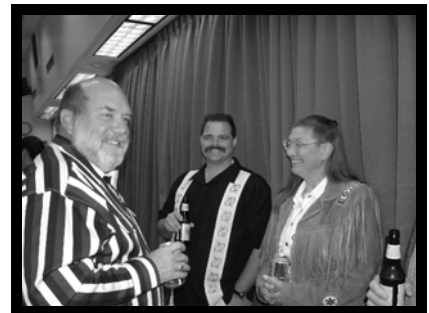
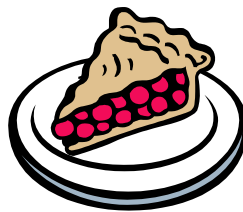
Back to the Future - starring all the returning VIPs – see you next year!

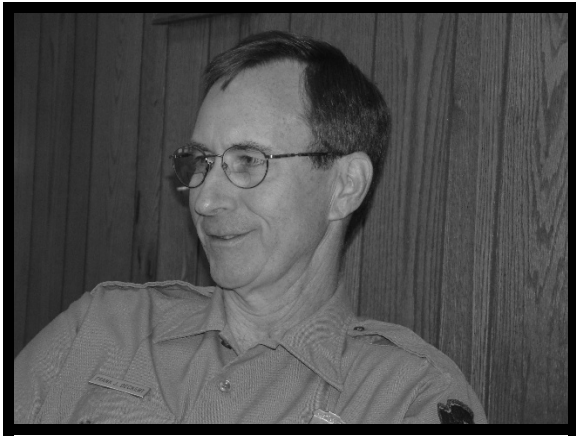


VOLUNTEER AWARD BANQUET!!



THANK YOU BIG BEND NATURAL
HISTORY ASSOCIATION
FOR A WONDERFUL DINNER AND
EVENING!!





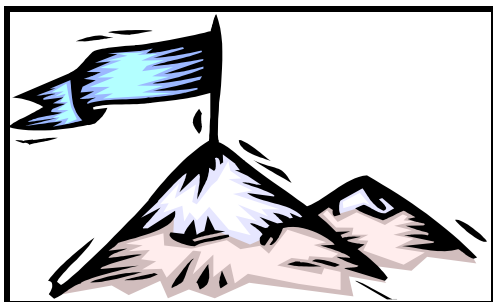
FRANK DECKERT, PARK SUPERINTENDENT

PARTING WORDS on VIPs

As volunteers, we see Big Bend National Park through somewhat different eyes than those of full-time staff, including the Superintendent. We asked Superintendent Frank Deckert to give us a few words on volunteers in the park before he retires in June.

Superintendent Deckert (“Frank” to almost everyone) told us he found the volunteer program here to be well-organized when he arrived. He recognizes the big load carried, not only by volunteers who come to the park individually, but those like the Americorps as well. He said it is good to recognize the mutual benefit between volunteers and the park. VIPs get satisfaction and unique experiences while the parks gets a valued labor force providing public and resource needs that might otherwise go unmet. He doesn’t expect the incoming Superintendent to make changes in the volunteer program here, except perhaps for some improvements.

When asked how he would like to be remembered, Deckert cited the number of issues not really under the control of any Superintendent (air quality as a prime example). Then he told us he would like to be recalled as a person who cared about his staff: “Take care of your people and they will take care of the park.” We thank him for his care and concern for volunteers.



OUR VOLUNTEERS

Persimmon Gap

Mark Kirtley – Visitor Center
Joan & Jack Lamkin – Visitor Center

Castolon

Norma & Lloyd Burgi – Interpretation
Steve Harper – Camp Host/Backcountry
Carol Hines – Interpretation

Rio Grande Village

Barbara & Bill Baldwin – Camp Hosts
Sam & Erv Drabek – Backcountry
Barbara & Richard Engle – Visitor Center
Gail & John Kamaras – Visitor Center

Chisos Basin

Bob Jacyna – Visitor Center
Sally & Bob Jones – Camp Hosts
Clara & George Willis – Camp Hosts

Panther Junction

Fran & Bernie Heyman – Interpretation
Dan Leavitt – Resource Management
Scarlett & Bob Wirt – Resource Management

River District

Steve McAllister – Backcountry

SCAs

Katrina Jensen – PJ Interpretation
Maria Lavender – PJ Interpretation
Casey Parks – PJ Interpretation
Adessa Schwartz – Castolon Res. Protection

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

RELAY FOR LIFE — Join Big Bend’s Relay Team to raise money for the American Cancer Society: Friday, April 25, 5 pm to Sat. April 26, 9 am, Alpine. Sign up at the PJ bulletin board. Donations are needed too — a great way to participate! Call Meghan Hicks at 477-2447 or 1187 for details.

ONGOING

Sunday Worship Services 10 am Chisos Amphitheater. 5:30 pm RGV amphitheater.

Big Bend Community Choir - Weds 5:30 pm Terlingua Elementary Band Room. Call 477-2377 or 2442.

Crafts – Every Monday in April at 7:30 pm PJ Community Room